

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A backlight unit, comprising:

a light source for generating light; and
an element comprising an incident portion, through which light generated by the light source enters into the element; and an emitting portion through which the entering light is emitted after traveling through the element,
wherein a rib is provided on at least a portion of a periphery of the element to reinforce the element, and a panel receiving portion is provided at a portion of the element surrounded by the rib.

2. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein the element is a light guide plate comprising a side through which light generated by the light source enters into the element and a first broad side through which the light is emitted after traveling through the element.

3. A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein:

the light guide plate is provided with a groove along at least a edge thereof and the light source is provided in the groove; and

light generated by the light source enters through

a first side of the groove into the light guide plate.

4. A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein:

a dot pattern of minute pits and projections is provided on the first broad side of the light guide plate; and

the light guide plate further comprises a second broad side opposed to the first broad side, a plurality of grooves being arranged in parallel on the second broad side.

5. A backlight unit according to claim 3, wherein a light reflective thin film is provided on a second side of the groove and not on the first side thereof.

6. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein:

a side of the element on which the emitting portion is provided is in the shape of a rectangle having four corner portions; and

the rib is provided in the vicinity of any of the four corner portions.

7. A backlight unit according to claim 6, wherein:

at least an additional rib is provided on at least

a portion of the periphery of the element; and

a plurality of ribs including the rib and the additional rib are provided in the vicinity of two adjacent corner portions of the four corner portions, in the vicinity of two opposing corner portions of the four corner portions, or in the vicinity of the four corner portions.

8. A backlight unit according to claim 6, wherein the rib is provided on any of the four corner portions as well as in the vicinity thereof.

9. A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein:

the element is a frame having a buried portion in which a light-transmissive material is buried; and

the buried portion comprises a side through which light generated by the light source enters into the element and a first broad side through which the entering light is emitted after traveling through the element.

10. A backlight unit according to claim 9, wherein:

the buried portion is provided with a groove along at least an edge thereof and the light source is provided in the groove; and

light generated by the light source enters through

a first side of the groove into the buried portion.

11. A backlight unit according to claim 9, wherein:

a dot pattern of minute pits and projections is provided on the first broad side of the buried portion; and

the buried portion further comprises a second broad side opposed to the first broad side, a plurality of grooves being arranged in parallel on the second broad side.

12. A backlight unit according to claim 10, wherein a light reflective thin film is provided on a second side of the groove and not on the first side thereof.

13. A liquid crystal display apparatus, comprising:

a liquid crystal panel; and

a backlight unit for illuminating the liquid crystal panel,

wherein the backlight unit comprises:

a light source for generating light;

an element comprising an incident portion, through which light generated by the light source enters into the element, and an emitting portion through which the light is emitted after traveling through the element,

wherein a rib is provided on at least a portion of a periphery of the element to reinforce the element, and a panel receiving portion is provided at a portion of the element surrounded by the rib.